and General Jefferson C. Davis, who commanded a division
in the Fourteenth Corps attached to Sherman's command,—
the same General Jeff. C. Davis, who, at the beginning of the
war, had attracted much attention by the killing of General
Nelson in the Gait House at Louisville. General Sherman
kindly invited me to sit with them, and I did so. A few minutes
later General Howard entered. I have already mentioned that
General Howard enjoyed the reputation of great piety, and
went by the name of " the Christian soldier/' General Sherman
greeted him in his brusque way, exclaiming: " Glad to see you,
Howard! Sit down by the fire! Damned cold this morning!"
Howard, who especially abhorred the use of " swear words,"
answered demurely: " Yes, General, it is *quite* cold this morn-
ing." Sherman may have noticed a slight touch of reproof
in this answer. At any rate, I observed a wink he gave General
Davis with his left eye, while a sarcastic smile flitted across his
features. It became at oiice clear what it meant, for Davis
instantly, while talking about some indifferent subject, began
to intersperse his speech with such a profusion of " damns "
and the like, when there was not the slightest occasion for it,
that one might have supposed him to be laboring under the
intensest excitement, while really he was in perfectly cold blood.
In fact, as I afterward learned, General Davis was noted for
having mastered the vocabulary of the "Army in

Flanders "
more completely than any other man of his rank. Howard
made several feeble attempts to give a different turn to the
conversation, but in vain. Encouraged by repeated winks and
also a few sympathetic remarks from Sherman, Davis inexor-
ably continued the lurid flow of his infernalisms, until finally
Howard, with distress painted all over his face, got up and left;
whereupon Sherman and Davis broke out in a peal of laughter.
And when I ventured upon a remark about Howard's suffer-